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DE RUEHBO #3018 2612102
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R 182102Z SEP 09
FM AMEMBASSY BOGOTA
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 0705
INFO RUEHBR/AMEMBASSY BRASILIA 9171
RUEHPE/AMEMBASSY LIMA 0118
RUEHLP/AMEMBASSY LA PAZ SEP PANAMA 4390
RUEHQ/AMEMBASSY QUITO 0116
RUEHCV/AMEMBASSY CARACAS 2943
RHMFSS/CDR USSOUTHCOM MIAMI FL
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC
RUEAWJC/DEPT OF JUSTICE WASHDC
RUCNFB/FBI WASHINGTON DC
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC

UNCLAS BOGOTA 003018

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: PGOV KJUS PREL PHUM PINR ASEC CO
SUBJECT: URIBE SET TO DISMANTLE DAS

REF: BOGOTA 002963 AND PREVIOUS

URIBE FAVORS DOING AWAY WITH DAS

¶1. (U) President Uribe announced on September 17th that he favored dismantling the wiretapping scandal-ridden Administrative Department of Security (DAS). In a much-anticipated move (reftels), Uribe proposed a much smaller entity managed by the Colombian National Police (CNP) that would focus on immigration services (NOTE: The DAS currently reports directly to the Presidency, and includes immigration services among its many duties. End Note.). Local media sources pointed out this was the first time Uribe has publicly spoken in favor of dismantling DAS, although then-Defense Minister Juan Manuel Santos had proposed doing so earlier this year.

¶2. (U) Uribe announced no further details, but on September 18th CNP Director General Oscar Naranjo told a radio interviewer that the CNP was ready to assume the DAS's police functions. He listed DAS's intelligence and judicial authorities as areas the CNP had a particularly strong capacity to handle. Naranjo opined that the overhaul had been in the works for some time and was not prompted by the most recent press revelations alleging illegal surveillance by DAS.

FORMER PRESIDENT SAYS
PROBLEM DEEPER THAN DAS

¶3. (U) Former President Cesar Gaviria, the head of the opposition Liberal Party, announced he was not convinced that dismantling DAS would solve the problem of illegal surveillance, according to leading daily "El Espectador." He added that he thought the problem could be easily solved by asking the government to stop conducting illegal surveillance. Gaviria, who has frequently accused Uribe and his advisors of ordering the surveillance, said the DAS had a long and honorable history, and that shuttering the agency was an attempt by the administration to "wash its hands" of the scandal. He called for an investigation by an independent body to ascertain who was behind the illicit monitoring.

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